

**TOWN OF ACTON
SIDEWALK COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES - 13 APRIL, 2016**

ATTENDEES

Sidewalk Committee: Bettina Abe, Kate Cheung, Jennifer Querbes, Dana Snyder-Grant, Cameren Cousins

Selectman: Peter Berry

Residents: Paul, Mary Ellen, and Eric Guditz (11 Macleod Lane); Karen Herther (10 Macleod Lane); Karin and Tony Victor (10 Heather Hill Road)

AGENDA

- Citizen's concerns
- March Minutes
- Update from Engineering
- Willow Street sidewalk and criteria rating sheet
- Comments on site plan for 394 Mass Ave: <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-7154>
- Comments on traffic study: [http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/Get/Document-52807/036%20\(3\)%20%20Acton%20Traffic%20Center%20Study%20Appendix.pdfCenterStudyAppendix.pdf](http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/Get/Document-52807/036%20(3)%20%20Acton%20Traffic%20Center%20Study%20Appendix.pdfCenterStudyAppendix.pdf)
- Complete Streets meeting on April 14 and brainstorming suggestions from Sidewalk Committee
- TAC's suggestion to transition "Bicycling issues, including recreational and commuter bike-path planning, roadway bicycle use, and other bicycle access issues" to Sidewalks

EMAILS OF NOTE (PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

Bill Troy of Willow Street inquired about two sections of Willow Street, one stretching between Summer and Central and the other stretching between Marian Street and the Stow town line.

CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

Residents of Macleod Lane and Heather Hill attended to express deep concern over the safety of pedestrians on Willow Street, between Stow town line and Marian Rd. (where the sidewalk picks up and does/will shortly extend to Central Street). Particularly dangerous is the set of curves near Macleod Lane and Heather Hill Road – the street has little or no shoulder, the embankment is steep, and there are a number of telephone poles and large trees that obstruct the views of both pedestrians and motorists. A map of private property lines was consulted, and it was agreed by all that the neighborhoods in question had no other realistic access to West Acton through proximal streets. The Sidewalk Committee members reviewed the criteria rating sheet that had been completed for that stretch of Willow Street, and discussed generally the process for evaluating, planning for, and then constructing a sidewalk in town. Macleod and Heather Hill residents wondered if the Sidewalk Committee could reassess the weight it gives to safety issues, and that sentiment was sincerely noted by committee members. Macleod and Heather Hill residents were encouraged to attend the upcoming Complete Streets public forum.

☑ Kate and Bettina will be in touch with Cory York (Engineering) about how certain pine trees affect sight lines. They will also ask that he be on the lookout for opportunities to implement a sidewalk on certain stretches of the road, if roadwork is planned or utilities need to do significant restructuring.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Approved unanimously.

UPDATE FROM THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

See Addendum A.

COMMENTS ON 394 MASSACHUSETTS AVE

The Committee examined the site plans and found that sidewalks were planned for both the short road into the property as well as eastward along Mass Ave. Because these plans are satisfactory, a comment to Engineering is not needed.

COMMENTS ON THE ACTON CENTER TRAFFIC STUDY

The Committee examined the traffic study and the four options for redesign of Acton Center. Questions were raised about what elements and phases of study or restructure the Board of Selectmen and Selectwomen had approved. When the Committee learns more about the specific stage of the redesign plan, comments may be submitted to Planning and Engineering. The general sentiment of the Committee was one of appreciation that traffic calming was being planned for that stretch of Main Street.

☑ Selectman Peter Berry will keep the Committee informed.

COMMENTS ON COMPLETE STREETS

No official comments will be made at the moment, but representatives from the Sidewalk Committee will attend both the smaller stakeholders' meeting and the public forum on April 14th.

COMMENTS ON COMMITTEE'S INVOLVEMENT WITH BICYCLING ISSUES

Committee members did not feel that this was within the purview of the group, and looks forward to participating in Complete Streets meetings and other focus groups in support of increased bicycle access and safety throughout the town.

ADDENDUM A: UPDATE FROM THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Below is an update about the sidewalk program:

High Street

(Audubon to Valley Road)

The Engineering Department is preparing for the scenic road hearing with the Planning Board and the Tree Warden. The public shade trees along High Street have been marked with flagging and will be officially posted soon. The hearing is scheduled for early June. (Valley Road to #172)

Everyone along this section is amendable to the project and we are working through the final details with a few of the remaining property owners.

Summer Street

Central Street to Willow Street

Engineering will be developing some alternatives in order to possibly complete the final section by Central Street.

Great Road

Main Street to Woodvale Condos

The Order of Conditions has been approved and we are seeking a MassDOT Access Permit.

Main St to Davis Road

We are awaiting the rail trail construction to avoid conflicts with the state's work.

Taylor Road and Minot Ave

Minot Ave to Barker Road

Engineering will be talking with these abutters to try and get their approval to move forward on this project. Two of the abutters have agreed to the sidewalk and we will work with them to hopefully complete the legal paperwork.

Stow Street/Maple Street

We're trying to coordinate this project with the MBTA and rail trail projects. The Rail Trail is proposing a neck down on Maple Street that will help with sight lines for the sidewalk Willow Street

Summer Street to Central Street

We are working through the final details with a couple of the remaining property owners.

Main Street

Great Road to Ledge Rock

Engineering is finalizing the sidewalk layout and will be sending out information to the abutters soon.

Across from Wheeler Lane

The crew should be able to complete the final missing section during this construction season.

Parker Street

High Street to Drummer Road

We are working through the final details with a couple of the remaining property owners.

Independence to RR Tracks

We've been talking with 2 of the condo complexes along Parker Street (Parker Crossing and Parker Village). We've talked with Parker Crossing about the sidewalk and the condo association is expected to talk about the project at their next meeting this week.

Parker Village discussed the sidewalk at their last meeting and they are ok with the project. The paperwork for Parker Village is expected to be delivered this week.

We hope to find a contact for the other condo complex (Rose Stone Condo) along Parker Street soon.

RR Tracks to Clover Hill Road

We are working on a bridge replacement design for the existing structure on Parker Street over Fort Pond Brook by Clover Hill Road. We have incorporated a sidewalk on the new bridge. We hope to add-in a sidewalk extension from the RR tracks to the intersection with Clover Hill Road with our existing sidewalk proposal. We have sent a letter to WR Grace to hopefully start discussions with them about the possibility of an easement. We're hoping to extend the survey to include the WR Grace site and the apartment complex. This additional design would also allow us to provide a pedestrian connection with the current Parker Street sidewalk project and the design for River Street.

Carlton to town line

The survey for this section is substantially done and Engineering will be updating the design soon.

River Street

The survey is done and we have started looking into design options.

Piper Road

We are preparing to hire a firm to survey the road.

Laws Brook Road & School Street (Hosmer to Laws Brook)

The survey is substantially done and Engineering will be finalizing the sidewalk design soon.

Route 111 (Juniper Ridge to Guggins Brook/Fort Pond)

Arlington Street (Summer to Sara)

Strawberry Hill Road (West of Pope)

Brook Street

Newtown Road (Simon Willard to Minuteman)

Parker Street (Clover Hill Rd to School St)

Staff will be incorporating the other remaining sidewalk locations into our upcoming work schedules.

Public Utilities

We are also continuing to work with the utility companies to complete the modifications to the poles and guy wires at certain locations to improve the head-room for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as accessibility for our sidewalk plowing equipment.

Complete Streets

The Town of Acton has partnered with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to develop a prioritization plan for Acton's Complete Street initiative. Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all the users of our streets, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles and for people of all ages and of all abilities.

The Town is planning a Public Forum on April 14, 2016 at 7:00PM to discuss the evaluation process and potential projects. This forum will take place in the Faulkner Meeting Room at Town Hall. We would like to invite everyone to attend and learn more about this program. Our goal is to establish a prioritization plan for Acton and seek construction funding this spring through the MassDOT Complete Street Funding Program (<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/8/docs/CompleteStreets/flyer.pdf>).

We hope that you'll be able to attend the Public Forum and help us enhance public safety and accessibility throughout Town. If you have any questions, please let me know.

ADDENDUM B: CURRENT LIST OF PRIORITIZED SIDEWALKS

Current Sidewalk Priority List

1. Great Road (Davis to Main)
2. High Street (77 to Parker)
3. Great Road (Main to Woodvale)
4. Taylor Road
5. Parts of Stow and Maple (in conjunction with Train Station)
6. Willow St (Kingman to Central)
7. Main St (2A to Ledge Rock Way, plus gap beyond)
8. Parker St (High to Drummer)
9. Piper (tied)
10. River (plus Chadwick) (tied)

Tier 2

11. Lawsbrook Road, all gaps, & School Street (Hosmer to Lawsbrook)
12. Route 111 (Juniper Ridge to Guggins Brook/Fort Pond)
13. Parker Street (River to School)
14. Arlington Street (Summer to Sara)
15. Strawberry Hill Road (West of Pope)
16. Brook Street
17. Parker (Carlton to Maynard town line)
18. Newtown Road (Simon Willard to Minuteman)